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Imagine a long, dark road on the outskirts of Ewa Beach, entwined with the sound of restrained whimpering from your parents, that people that you thought would give you support. Finally imagine, the feeling of being glared at by your neighbors, watching you embarrassingly walk away from your home. This was the night that my family and I had been evicted from our home, and where homelessness became a reality. Hello, my name is David Cachero, from the Hale Pono Boys & Girls Club in Ewa Beach, and because of my clubhouse, I no longer have to fear the reality of being homeless.

Now everything didn't used to be so grim. I had a nice family and my parents had jobs. Everything was great! It wasn't until my parent's divorce in 2009 where everything started to go downhill. My father, who was my absolute role model, left my brother and I with our mom, who I didn't have a great relationship with. Not only that, but she started seeing different men, which led to her addiction in hard drugs. Slowly, I watched my mother deteriorate from the woman that she was, and family crumble into dust.

Now fast forward five years later, we live in a rundown home where the landlord is a drug dealer. Drugs and violence soon became an everyday thing. I couldn't take this anymore so I decided to get away from it all and spend most of my time at the basketball courts. After a few weeks of playing, one of my friends had invited me to be a part of the 2013 Fall Invitational Basketball Tournament. I signed the papers to be a member which eventually led me to my transformation.

Shortly after the tournament ended, the problems at home got even worse to the point where nights at the basketball courts didn't help anymore so coming to the clubhouse was my get away from everything. Immediately after walking into the clubhouse, Lori saw the distress that I had faced and tried to find out what was wrong. At that point, my emotions exploded and I told her about what I have been facing for 6 years. Soon after I could see the sympathy that she had built in her eyes, and that's where I realized that the staff at the Boys & Girls Club are more than just staff, they are friends that you can rely on for support. Eventually I had become a

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part of the Leaders in Training Program. This program teaches members how to be impactful leaders of the clubhouse and community. It was through this program and the Boys and Girls Club that I had begun to notice a change within myself. I had learned skills like budgeting and organization, where I learned to apply it to my own life.

I took these skills home to my mother, and taught her how to budget her money and organize her life. Slowly I watched my mom come back to the mother that she used to be. And that was when I realized, just how impactful the club was to me. Not only did the clubhouse change my life, it changed my family's life. If it weren't for the clubhouse and their staff, I wouldn't have been able to help fix my family and bring us out of this darkness. After walking through complete darkness for a long time, my family and I began to see light closer and closer we draw to it and finally we see that the light that had gotten us through the most daunting part of our lives was the Hale Pono Boys and Girls Club of Hawaii. Now I don't have to worry about darkness. I don't have to worry about homelessness. There is abundant light and bright futures ahead, for the light of the Boys and Girls Club had given me the opportunity for a great future. Thank you.

Sincerely,

David Cachero

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Cachero", written over a horizontal line.

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